



May 12, 2015

The Honorable Ron Barber, Diana DeGette, Doris Matsui,  
Grace Napolitano, and Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Strengthening Mental Health in Our Communities Act of 2014

Dear Representative Barber and Co-Sponsors:

On behalf of the American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA), I write to offer our support for the Strengthening Mental Health in Our Communities Act of 2014. ADTA supports efforts to improve and enhance broad-based mental health services across the age span and applaud your efforts to shine a light on the fact that current services are inadequate to meet the increased need in communities across the country.

Founded nearly 50 years ago, ADTA advocates nationally and internationally for the development and expansion of dance/movement training and services. Dance/movement therapy focuses on movement behavior within a therapeutic relationship. Body movement is used in dance/movement therapy simultaneously as a form of assessment and a mode of intervention. Dance/movement therapists practice in a variety of settings, including mental health, rehabilitation, medical, educational, and forensic.

Dance/movement therapists have a growing presence in addressing the needs of military veterans and wounded warriors. They work in both veterans' hospitals and military centers, and their work has been recognized nationally as critical to the care of our service members. We appreciate your acknowledgement of the need for more well-trained mental health professionals in the VA and believe creative arts therapists have an important role to play in providing these services.

We support the establishment of a White House Office of Mental Health Policy and believe part of the responsibility of such an office include encouraging the use of complementary and alternative therapies that focus on the mind-body connection. ADTA would be pleased to participate in this discussion. Further, we applaud the bill's language focused on developing the behavioral health workforce and urge your recognition of creative arts therapists as integral to this effort.

We look forward to working with you and would be pleased to serve as a resource as the legislation moves forward. If you have questions or we can provide additional information, please contact ADTA Government Relations consultant Myrna Mandlawitz, [mrmassociates@verizon.net](mailto:mrmassociates@verizon.net).

Again, thank you for your strong commitment to ensuring mental health care for all our citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherry W. Goodill", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Sherry W. Goodill, PhD, BC-DMT, NCC, LPC  
President